

**Questions and Answers
for
Georgia Volunteer Clinic Program
Grant Request for Proposals
Posted on April 24, 2006**

- 1. How do we enroll in the volunteer program? Can an entity enroll or do you have to enroll each provider?**

If the entity is a 501(c)3 organization, then the organization can be covered under sovereign immunity protection that allows, and the organization will have its own DCH agreement. Each licensed health care provider will be individually contracted with DCH.

- 2. If we provide free health care can we use other funds to pay providers for their time while providing free healthcare? (not DCH or State funds)**

Licensed health care providers cannot be compensated if they want sovereign immunity protection from the state. However, a paid clerical worker who completes the departmental forms may be compensated.

- 3. How many referrals can we expect from the Department?**

What the Department means by accepting all referrals from the Department is that either a volunteer or paid employee who volunteers/works at the clinic and is signed up and trained by DCH, has determined that the patient is financially eligible. That volunteer or paid employee then completes a "Patient Referral Form" on behalf of DCH, and that is considered a referral. Therefore, the clinic determines how many patients it wants to accept for care

- 4. Can the grant services be held at multiple sites and the grant monies spent at one site?**

The location and use of grant funds should be clearly illustrated in the grant application. The Volunteer Group may have multiple locations and elect to only disburse funds in one location as long as that is clearly illustrated in the grant application.

**Questions and Answers
for
Georgia Volunteer Clinic Program
Grant Request for Proposals
Posted on April 24, 2006**

5. Are we required to check eligibility each visit or can we check it quarterly, etc.?

A financial form is completed initially and is good for a year unless any information on it has changed. A Patient Referral Form is completed for every visit.

6. Can grant monies be used to service illegal aliens for free?

The grant funds are state monies, and the use is limited by state law.

7. Can the services be provided on a sliding fee scale based on the federal poverty guidelines, or do they have to be completely free?

Services provided must be completely free.

8 Is there a problem with an organization overseen by a Board of Health?

No, there is no issue with the organization being overseen by a Board of Health.

9. Ours is not a typical non-profit clinic and over the years I have applied for and received grants to cover services our clinic could not provide for clients but which were desperately needed. These include contracts with dentist for extractions and with Ophthalmologists, Optometrists and opticians for eye exams and glasses for diabetics. In each of these cases, our reimbursement rates were way below their normal rates and services far exceeded our contract. But we did pay them something. Is this a problem?

If the clinic is billing, then the licensed health care providers will not be covered under sovereign immunity protection. Only services provided and eligible for sovereign immunity protection are eligible for grant funds.

**Questions and Answers
for
Georgia Volunteer Clinic Program
Grant Request for Proposals
Posted on April 24, 2006**

10. Is the grant money for dental and primary health care separate? Can you apply for the \$50,000 dental portion with the \$25,000 primary health care proposal? Are they two separate proposals or do you have to combine the proposal and to only total \$50,000 for the total project of dental/primary care?

The maximum award is \$50,000 per applicant which includes dental. The maximum for a Primary Care award only is \$25,000. No applicant can receive more than \$50,000. For example, an applicant may request \$15,000 to provide primary care and \$35,000 to provide dental care; or the applicant may apply for \$50,000 for dental only. Applications for primary care and dental combined will not automatically be denied funding for one service if the application is not funded for the other service.

11. Is it possible to see the contract with DCH that the grant recipient would need to sign or to get an outline of the contents of that contract?

The DCH agreement is being reviewed by the legal staff. The contract will reflect what is required by the Rules.

12. What specific paperwork will need to be submitted to DCH?

For licensed health care professionals, they will submit a contract and application. For unlicensed volunteers/paid workers, they will complete an application, background check, two personal references, and an Affidavit of Good Moral Character.

13. What amount of training (time) will be required of staff of the recipient.

The unlicensed DCH volunteer or paid clinic clerical worker that completes the required paperwork on behalf of DCH will require training. This training will be conducted until the volunteer/paid worker feels comfortable with completing the paperwork.

**Questions and Answers
for
Georgia Volunteer Clinic Program
Grant Request for Proposals
Posted on April 24, 2006**

**14. Who assesses the financial need of patients referred by DCH?
Will the recipient be required to do this?**

The DCH volunteer or paid worker will complete a one-page financial form to determine the patient's eligibility for the program. The clinic may either allow the recipients to self-declare their income or provide minimum proof, such as a paycheck stub for the last four weeks.

15. Are there specific restrictions on seeing referral patients from DCH i.e. seeing them within a certain time after the referral?

A Patient Referral Form is completed every time the patient comes into the clinic for services. If the patient is being referred to a specialist or hospital, then services can be scheduled at a later date as long as the patient has a completed Patient Referral Form referring him/her to that specialist or hospital.

16. I'm a little unclear about the liability coverage advantaged by this program. Is the provider covered as an employee of the state only for services provided through this grant program, or are they covered for their private practice as well (as long as they aren't doing experimental procedures, or procedures outside their scope of practice, etc.)? Any clarification you could offer would be greatly appreciated.

The provider is covered under sovereign immunity protection, as long as he or she is contracted with the state, provided care to someone who has been determined eligible by a DCH volunteer or paid worker who has gone through the DCH training, and only for the time he or she is volunteering at a clinic or the office. The advantage of sovereign immunity protection is that if a patient who receives services under this protection chooses to sue, then the licensed health care professional is not named on the lawsuit. Many licensed health care professionals' malpractice insurance does not cover them when they "step outside the scope" of their office, and

**Questions and Answers
for
Georgia Volunteer Clinic Program
Grant Request for Proposals
Posted on April 24, 2006**

many retired professionals did not keep their insurance. If you participate under this program/grant, only the contact with the patients involved under this program/grant will allow you sovereign immunity. That immunity will not transfer to a private practice.

17. Appendix I and J have a color-coded scheme associated with them. However, there is no indication for those counties which are white in color. It appears to me that several of those counties which are coded white would and should be considered low-income areas. Could you please provide clarification on the color-coded scheme and what is the status of the counties that are coded white.

The legend in the top right of each map indicates the various designations that counties have received. The counties that are coded in white currently do not have a designation. To be considered eligible you must contact Dave Hartin (229.401.3090) and complete the required information so that he may give a preliminary determination if the area meets the HRSA requirements for designation. This information must be provided with your grant application. The determination may not be completed until after the grant close date. If it is determined that your site is located in an area that is underserved your application will be considered. Otherwise you will be notified that you are not eligible for the grant.

It is important to note that some larger counties may hold designations for certain census tracts and not the entire county. If you need the specific census tract you may visit <http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/> or call Dave Hartin (229-401-3090).

Many counties may not hold a designation because there has not been a community representative available to provide the information

**Questions and Answers
for
Georgia Volunteer Clinic Program
Grant Request for Proposals
Posted on April 24, 2006**

18. The maps in Appendix I and J are confusing as a result of the information listed in question 1 above. Is there further information that is readily available for us to better identify if the cities we are located in are eligible for this grant? Is there specific information that we can review for the specific neighborhoods in which we are located. For example, Fulton county (Atlanta), is not entirely a DHPSA. If we provide you with the address of the clinics in each city, would you be able to tell us if that specific region is in a DHPSA?

See response to question 17.

20. We are working on setting up agreements with the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) for each of our clinics. NHSC currently doesn't identify the neighborhoods we are in as a HPSA zone. We are not sure if NHSC uses the same criteria as the information you provided, but it appears that initially our clinics may not fall into the DHPSA qualification zones.

To be eligible for the grant you must be located in a shortage area with a current designation or provide information immediately so that your designation may be evaluated. The information should be submitted immediately to Dave Hartin within the DCH/State Office of Rural Health, 502 South 7th Street, Cordele, GA 31015; 229-401-3090. For direction on the required data please contact Mr. Hartin.